

8 July 1957

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Deputy Director (Intelligence)  
**FROM:** Assistant Director for Basic Intelligence  
**SUBJECT:** Value of OBI Budget in terms of  
NIS Program Accomplishments

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In response to your request, I enclose a draft on the  
NIS Program for use in replying to question No. 24 of the  
Appropriations Subcommittee of the Congress.

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**Enclosure:**  
OBI/CIA draft  
dated 8 July 57

**Distribution:**  
Orig and 2 - addressee  
1 - NIS Program - General  
1 - NIS Program - Presentation to Congress  
1 - Special Studies  
1 - chrono

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**The Office of Basic Intelligence, CIA**

The NIS Program was initiated by direction of the National Security Council in 1948 in order to assure full and timely intelligence on all foreign countries of the world in the event of another war. The deficiencies in such basic intelligence during World War II were disastrous in many instances. Comprehensive basic intelligence is also required in this cold war period as one basis for sound national intelligence and strategic planning. To this end, the NIS is produced in accordance with current priorities established by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. OBI's job is essentially that of coordinating this complex program, reviewing the contributions and publishing the end product. Some forty components within agencies of the Government, including the CIA, participate in this program in accordance with their specialized capabilities.

The NIS Program is steadily fulfilling the mission set for it by the National Security Council. To date a total of nearly 3,500 sections have been produced and placed under active maintenance, representing some 65% of the total world coverage. The material printed in the NIS represents only a portion of the intelligence made available under the operation of the program. The stimulation of collection activities to fill "gaps" existing in the intelligence field, has provided a great new reservoir of information. Detailed intelligence, analyzed in the process of producing the NIS but not appearing therein, is available in organized form and provides a ready source for the day-to-day and operational intelligence requirements of the agencies.

In addition to the centralized support of the NIS Program, the CIA budgets for the non-Defense agencies which contribute to the program, including the research and standardization of geographic names for the NIS Gazetteers. The development of these various intelligence requirements under one coordinated program is not only a more efficient and less costly process than would result from the uncoordinated efforts of individual agencies, but it also is providing for the first time adequate intelligence support required by the national security.

The program has already proved its value as a standard reference work throughout the government, as a basis for plans and estimates in critical world areas, as Korea and Indochina, and is finding increasing usefulness in such new fields as psychological warfare. Above all, it would prove invaluable in the event of a major war. It is significant

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